

captain.¹ The fortification scheme was shelved, but the appointment was granted, excepting in one respect: it was as a lieutenant, not as a captain, that François Zola entered the Foreign Legion in *July*, 1831.

His career in that corps proved very brief, and ended strangely. Many years afterwards an unprincipled journalist, anxious to discredit Zola's championship of Captain Dreyfus, raked up the episode in order to denounce the novelist as the son of a thief. But it is certain that some documents cited at the time were entirely forged, that others were falsified in part, and that others, again, were suppressed. This can occasion no surprise when it is remembered that one of the *dossiers* concerning François Zola, preserved at the French War Office, passed for a time into the possession of the notorious forger, Colonel Henry;² and that an unscrupulous Minister, General Billot, by asserting authoritatively that certain papers did not exist,³ contrived to delay their discovery. Those matters will require notice hereafter; at this stage one need only mention that the attack on François Zola's memory was answered first in a work called "*Le Père d'Émile Zola*" by a Socialist journalist, writing under the name of⁴ Jacques Dhur," and secondly by Émile Zola himself in a series of newspaper

articles,
which he reprinted in a volume entitled "La
V6rit6 en
Marche."

After studying those books and the
documents they
quote, nobody of impartial mind can entertain
the graver
charges preferred against the novelist's
father. In Ms time

, * "La V6rit6 en Marche," pp. 259, 280-282.

² Probably in March, 1898. "La V6rit6 en Marche," pp.
251-253.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 277-279.